

# Community Focus: Pierce County

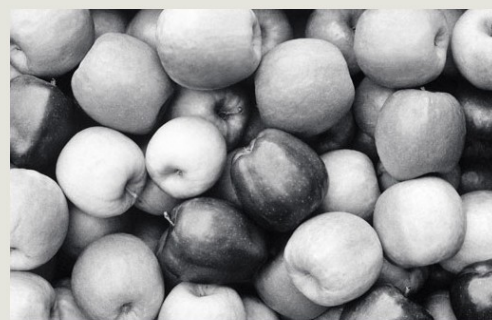
## HUNGER



As of 2009, 19.5% of Americans live in hunger. In Washington, one in five households reported not having enough money to buy the food they needed. Households with children had a rate double that of others.

### FOOD BANK SERVICES

Despite the fact that 40% of people accessing food services are working, over 140,000 people in Pierce County sought out food assistance each month in 2009. This amounts to one in seven residents. A rise from 100,160 in 2008. Children and seniors represent 53% of those served.



"To everyone who helped my family, who however indirectly enabled me to give back, **thank you, thank you, thank you.**" – GRACE

Photo by: Young Lee

*Source: United Way Community Indicators ([www.indicators.uwpc.org](http://www.indicators.uwpc.org)) based on Associated Ministries ESAP Data; Emergency Food Network 2010 at [www.efoodnet.org](http://www.efoodnet.org)*

## CRIME & CHILDREN

Charity mentorship, after-school and early learning programs help us ensure our children end up on the right path towards a successful life.

- Violent Crime arrests among children ages 10 to 17 in Pierce County during 2007 was 3.02 per 1,000, which is 22% higher than the rate for Washington.
- Domestic Violence offenses (acts against one family member by another) totaled 7,340 for Pierce County in 2008. This is twice the rate for Washington.

*Source: United Way Community Indicators based on DSHS Dec 2007 Risk and Protection Profile for Substance Abuse in Pierce County.*



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# PATHWAY TO A HEALTHY LIFE

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## CHILD BIRTH & PRE-NATAL CARE

In Pierce County, the number of mothers receiving no or late prenatal care has



**nearly doubled** from three births per 100 in 2003 to **5.5** births per 100 in 2006. When mothers do not receive prenatal care their babies are – three times as likely to have low birth weight and **five times as likely to die!**

*SOURCE: United Way Pierce County Community Indicators based upon US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration) Birth Certificate Data: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics*

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## OUR HEALTH

Funds for medical research have gone along way. For example, pediatric cancer survivorship is near 80% compared to 4% in the 1950s. Yet, the battle continues:

### HIV/AIDS

- Cases of HIV/AIDS kids 13 or younger: 9,000 in US
- According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), HIV/AIDS has claimed 550,000 Americans and 1.1 million Americans are presently battling the disease.
- The CDC notes in Washington: reported 12,237 cases through December 2007 ranking Washington 19th out of 50 states.

### CANCER

- **In 2010** - It is estimated that there will be over 207,000 new cases of breast cancer and 217,000 cases of prostate cancer. Prostate cancer is expected to cause 32,000 deaths in the United States.
- Rate of breast cancer in Washington: 135 per every 100,000 women
- Average annual count of all incidence of cancer in Pierce County: 3,598
- Death rate trends (per 100,000) is 198 with average of 1,293 deaths annually



*SOURCE: 2008; National Cancer Institute (state cancer profiles); St Jude 2010 at [www.stjude.org](http://www.stjude.org); Susan G. Komen 2010 see <http://www5.komen.org/breastcancer/statistics>; CDC 2008 Washington Profile see [www.cdc.gov/hiv](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv)*

# POVERTY & HOMELESSNESS

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## POVERTY LEVELS

- Poverty rate for a family of four is \$20,650. This provides insight into the number of people going without basic needs being met.
- Nearly 16,000 of the 193,494 families in 2008 fell below the federal poverty line. An increase of 2,000 families from 2000.
- The number of individuals was 85,914 as of 2006.
- Now a whopping 39.7% of K -12 children in Pierce County need to access free and reduced lunch programs to ensure they can have something to eat at school.



*SOURCE: United Way Pierce County Community Indicators based upon 2000 US Census and 2006 and 2008 American Community Survey ; Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.*

- Emergency assistance phone calls to South Sound 2-1-1 for homelessness prevention services (rent, utility and mortgage assistance) surpassed 2,600 calls for both the second and third quarters of 2009. This is almost double the rate in 2006 (1,495).

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*SOURCE: South Sound 2-1-1 Call Center, operated by United Way of Pierce County*

## HOMELESSNESS

- Availability of beds in Pierce County: 439 emergency beds (1 night); 1,075 transitional (max 2 years); 306 permanent beds for those with disabilities.
- Yet, the number of homeless people (those without shelter) in 2009 was 2,083.

This included 648 children.



- Washington ranks 35th in nation in % of homeless children
- According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) since 2003:
  - (1) Number of homeless counted across US increased by more than 80%.
  - (2) Total number of families counted has increased by 112%.
  - (3) The number of people in families counted increased by 150%, including 123% increase with children.

*SOURCE: United Way Pierce County Community Indicators based upon Pierce County Human Services—Housing, annual homeless count; Pierce County Department of Community Services—Housing Programs; 2009 The National*



CHECK OUT CHARITIES  
ONLINE @  
**[www.cfd.wa.gov](http://www.cfd.wa.gov)**

## Raining Cats & Dogs

We love our pets, and in 2009 Pierce County nearly 14,000 of them found their way into shelters. Although many found homes, or were reunited with their owners, we still had over 5,300 cats and dogs euthanized.

*SOURCE: Tacoma Humane Society  
2009 Annual Report*



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## Saving the Sound



Washington's Puget Sound is comprised of 2,800 miles of inland marine waters and 2,500 miles of shoreline. This body of water contains over 211 different species of fish, 100 sea bird species and 13 types of marine mammals.

Each year, millions of pounds of toxic chemicals find their way into the sound via surface and stormwater runoff, along with municipal and wastewater outfall.

These toxic agents include oil, grease, PCB, copper, lead, and zinc that damage our waters and impact the food chain.



In 2008, the Department of Ecology also found 549 streams, rivers, and lakes in the Sound basin that were polluted. The water isn't the only issue we face. Orca whales in the South Sound rank near the top of the list of most PCB contaminated mammals on the planet. Additionally, the seals you may see bobbing across the water are 7x as contaminated with toxic chemicals as their counterparts in Canada's Strait of Georgia.



*SOURCE: WA Department of Ecology at [www.ecy.wa.gov/puget\\_sound](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/puget_sound)*